THE

Commonweal

Realities of History

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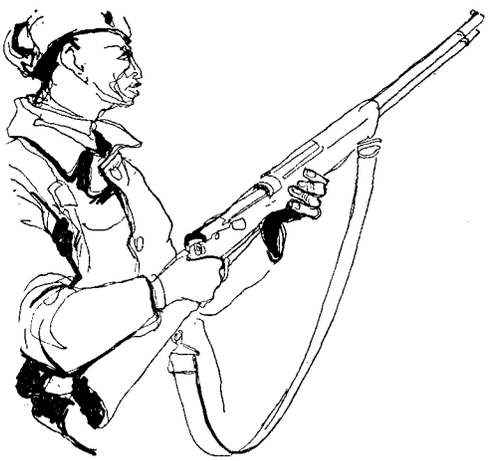
by C. K. Yearley, Jr.

Stockholm Premiere

O'NEILL'S LONG JOURNEY

by Stephen Whicher



More Than A Tyranny

The Nature of Stalinism

by Michael Harrington

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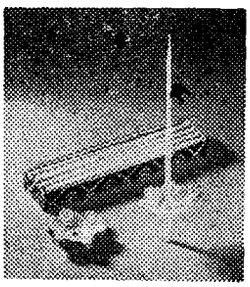

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The Commonweal

week by week

CANDIDATE EISENHOWER

THE ISSUES in any major political campaign are probably never as simple and clear-cut as they seem to those directly and emotionally involved. But once the popular excitement aroused by the President's decision to run again wears off, it should be obvious that the issues involved in the coming Presidential campaign are going to be particularly complex.

Perhaps it was a mistake to imagine that it would be otherwise; possibly there was never any real hope for a simple, black-and-white decision. But, for one reason or another, most political commentators anticipated that once the President spoke, everything would be clear. The assumption was that Mr. Eisenhower would either take himself firmly out of the race, or that he would announce he was as good as new. But when the time came, Mr. Eisenhower made his pronouncement in quite negative terms. A large part of his TV announcement dealt with the strains he must in the future avoid—the excessive fatigue, the too-long hours, the political barn-storming and the like—and the net effect was quite different from the open-and-shut result everyone anticipated.

Immediately after Mr. Eisenhower's decision was announced, newsmen began to ask political leaders of both parties, "Do you think the President's health will be an issue in the campaign?" So far, Democrats are tending to say "yes" and Republicans to answer "no," but the question itself seems nonsense. Common decency should, of course, prevail in discussions of the President's health; any violation of good taste in this matter will certainly hurt the offender. But Mr. Eisenhower's health is an issue, simply because his heart attack is a fact; his physical ability or inability to carry out the duties of his office is bound to be a factor in the Presidential voting. We do not see how it could be otherwise.

The unresolved question of Mr. Eisenhower's health means that a radically new element has been injected into speculation on the outcome of the election. Previously, the consensus was that if Mr. Eisenhower ran again he would win with no trouble. Now we are not so sure. The President is a phenomenally popular figure; the voters may still give him an overwhelming vote of confidence, despite the restrictions placed upon him by his illness. One man recently summed up Republican sentiments when he said, rather crudely, "Half an Eisenhower is better than two Democrats, any day." But this election, like the last one, is likely to be settled by the independent voters, and its outcome is not quite the foregone conclusion it appeared to be a few weeks ago.

AS FOR the campaign itself, a wide area of agreement exists between the two major parties, at least when the moderates on each side are in control—a fact that is obvious if one considers the ideological chasms that separate European parties and that divide and almost paralyze the government of a nation like France. But outside this area of agreement, the differences between the two parties will be sharpened in the coming campaign, on farm prices, on the domestic economy, on tax policy, on the methods required to achieve the American goal of equal justice for all. And, above all, the coming campaign can perform a useful service if it provides for analysis and re-examination of United States foreign policy.

The possibilities of useful debate in this area would be greater if the Republicans had really altered the foreign policy of their Democratic predecessors in any substantial way. Actually, however, if one excludes questions of degree to allow for the GOP penchant for reducing defense expenditures and its general preoccupation with balancing the budget, the Republicans have not done this. Instead, they have tried to enjoy the best of two possible worlds, customarily phrasing foreign-policy utterances in the disastrous terms of the 1952 GOP platform, but in practice continuing to follow the broad outlines of foreign policy laid down by previous Democratic Administrations.

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Thus Taft-isolationists like what the Administration says, if not what it does, and internationalists usually like what it does, if not what it says.

This Administration policy of being many things to all men will make coming to grips with the issue of foreign policy in the campaign far from easy. Yet it is essential that it be done. For aside from budget-paring in vital areas and the mistaken belief that "moderation" means not budgeting quite enough money for any one project, the present Administration's great weakness in foreign policy is not so much that it has changed as that it has not changed enough. It has so far failed to come up with fresh and imaginative solutions to the new problems that now confront us. And whether the voters entrust the nation's affairs to the Democrats or to the Republicans next fall, it is time for a "new look" at America's foreign policy if we are to meet the changing dimensions of a new and dangerous kind of Soviet threat.

PIUS XII's BIRTHDAY

THERE ARE many reasons for the acclaim which has greeted Pope Pius XII on his eightieth birthday and the completion of seventeen years as the visible head of the Catholic Church. Throughout the darkness and turbulence that have marked so much of his pontificate, Pius has stood forth to the world as a man of peace with solicitude for all his fellow-men. His personal sufferings, sacrifices and ministrations to the most needy have been continuous during a period which has compassed the horrors of World War II and of Nazi and Communist persecution.

In the intensity of his devotion to world peace Pius XII, in his Christmas messages and elsewhere, has greatly concerned himself with the practical foundations for a just and lasting peace: equitable distribution of the fruits of the earth, of "living space," of important means of production. He has called for greater and freer international trade, the lowering of immigration barriers and all sorts of fruitful regional and wider international agreements. He has emphasized the need of more efficacious international organization and the growing urgency of disarmament—all these without underplaying the menace Communism constitutes for mankind or neglecting in any way the spiritual aspects of brotherly love and peace embodied in the basic Christian message. For Pius XII is also preeminently a man of prayer. Little wonder that such a man, the common father of Christendom, has won and held the admiration of men of every race and creed throughout these troubled times.

NEXT WEEK

THOMAS MOLNAR writes about "the American experiment" and the French intellectual:

"Since nothing is as impressive, even in international relations, as success, the ability of the Americans to equip and mobilize their peaceful nation, to put their shoulders behind the war effort, and to survive unscathed in a world of ruins and chaos, all the while preserving democratic freedoms, started people thinking of 'the American experiment.' Many fellow-traveling observers of the world scene were obliged to admit to themselves that the Soviet had reached a dead-end street in which the worst features of Western history, from the Industrial Revolution to the Nazi concentration camps, were not only reproduced but, in addition, enlarged and Asianized. As a result, their attention turned to the continent across the Atlantic in order to explore yet other avenues of Western evolution."

THE PROBLEMS OF PLENTY

SECRETARY of Agriculture Benson recently announced that the U.S. would put all of its government-owned surplus cotton on the world auction block this summer. In announcing this decision, Mr. Benson denied that he was "dumping" cotton to force down prices on the world market; rather, he said, this action was a warning to other nations that the U.S. will not continue "to hold an umbrella over world markets."

In the context of domestic politicking Mr. Benson's furling of the umbrella over cotton prices may be a good political move, designed to relieve one of the Administration's most persistent headaches—the farm problem. Southern members of Congress, for example, have long been urging a move such as Mr. Benson's; this fact, coupled with his recent offer to Southern Senators of a higher support price for cotton, gives Mr. Benson a well-baited hook in his effort to land Southern support for the Administration's flexible farm-price support system. So far as voters throughout the country are concerned, moving five million bales of surplus cotton every year can be represented as lowering appreciably that mountain of surpluses in whose gloomy shadow Mr. Benson operates.

Unfortunately, Mr. Benson's decision cannot be weighed in the scales of domestic pressures and politics alone; what is, politically, meat in Chattanooga may be poison in Cairo, as a recent spokes-

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man for the Egyptian government made plain when he said that Egypt was "most unhappy" at the Administration's decision to sell its cotton surplus abroad, and termed it "a very unfortunate step at this time." When the umbrella over cotton prices is removed, Egypt, as a leading producer, is obviously going to get quite wet—and disgruntled.

Other nations, more tangibly friendly to the U.S. than is Egypt, have also complained about this country's cut-rate competition in world markets—Canada about wheat, Thailand about rice, and New Zealand about dairy products. One of the strongest voices yet raised in protest is that of the retiring president of Uruguay, Luis Batlle Berres, who declared that the American policy of maintaining trade barriers at home and dumping surpluses abroad had seriously weakened Uruguay's markets for wheat, butter and fats. As a consequence, his country, long friendly to the U.S. and firmly anti-Communist, has been forced to "seek relief" through sales behind the Iron Curtain.

Secretary of State Dulles, of course, has long realized that even though it may cost the U.S. one million dollars a day to store its agricultural surpluses, the cost in strained friendships of dispersing them on world markets is ultimately too high a price to pay for this solution to the problem of our abundance. Hence Secretary Benson's latest stratagem would seem to indicate either a lack of proper liaison between the Departments of State and Agriculture, or an Administration decision to shore up its shaky farm policy at home even at the risk of weakening our relations abroad. After all, Egyptians do not vote in U.S. elections.

In any event, the fact that Mr. Dulles' hand is now in Mr. Benson's dike illuminates, but does not solve the problem. In 1955 the U.S. sold or gave almost one billion dollars worth of surplus products to foreign consumers; nevertheless, the government now holds a surplus valued at more than eight billion dollars, an increase of one billion dollars since 1954. Added to this is the intangible cost in weakened American prestige and influence abroad as a result of our surplus disposal. Bookkeeping such as this indicates that the Administration must look for a solution to its farm problem which is both more imaginative and effective than robbing Foster to pay Ezra.

INVITATION TO LEARNING

THE ASSOCIATION for Higher Education has recently released statistics which indicate that the present record enrollment of three million students in American colleges and universities may well be doubled by 1970. This ever-increasing desire of students to obtain a higher education is matched, however, by the monumental indifference of many of the educators and legislators whose responsibility it will be to meet the demands for such education with more than marginal success.

A nation-wide survey made by the U.S. Office of Education reveals that officials in only six states have taken effective steps to handle this expected expansion of their college populations; the majority of educators and legislators are, seemingly, confident that time will take care of the rising tide of students which threatens to gradually engulf their present college and university facilities. Such lethargic response to a vital challenge is in sharp contrast to our professed national awareness of that "need for education in a democracy" which has long been a favorite theme of so many educators and legislators.

TO PREVENT HOSTILITIES

SINCE THE middle of last November the Israeli government has been trying to buy American arms to offset the arming of Egypt—and promises to other Arab states—by the Soviets. It wants to build up its anti-aircraft and anti-submarine equipment and acquire a lot more jet planes. The United States has naturally been reluctant to get involved in a rearming contest with the Soviet Union; Mr. Dulles has expressed the opinion that the far more extensive and populous Arab countries would be the eventual winner in an arms race with Israel.

But the pressures are mounting. Coming when it did, the shipment of eighteen American tanks to Saudi Arabia under a 1951 agreement led to heated protests. Then there are the twelve French jet fighters which Israel seeks to purchase. Principally, however, it is the wane of the restraining power of the British in the Middle East that imbues the situation with increasing urgency. Their main base at Suez is scheduled to be given up soon in accordance with an agreement with Egypt. Their tenure in Cyprus, a less powerful base of considerable importance at the strategic crossroads of the Eastern Mediterranean, is gravely threatened by nationalist unrest. And now, to cap it all, young King Hussein of Jordan has suddenly expelled General John Bagot Glubb, head of the famed Arab Legion. To the recurrently warlike voice of Premier Nasser of Egypt has been added King Hussein's reported threat to embark on the "liberation of all of Palestine."

Clearly this is hardly a situation where things can be allowed to drift; it is too explosive. There

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is a real danger of an outbreak of full-fledged war. The possibility of Russian intervention in such hostilities and the securing of vast oil reserves big enough to permit the USSR to carry on a protracted global war must not be overlooked.

Here is a highly appropriate case for UN action. The borders between Israel and her four Arab neighbors are hardly very extensive. No one of the nations involved is a major power. In view of Russia's present "peace offensive," it need not necessarily be assumed that the Soviets would antagonize new-found and prospective friends by vetoing Security Council action against an aggressor. Even in case of such a vote the immediate convening of the Assembly and the other collective security measures provided for in the Uniting for Peace Resolution of 1950 may be brought into play. For such action only a majority vote in the Assembly is required. This is the direction of the most constructive possibilities in this crisis.

THE MONTGOMERY PROTEST

AS THEIR boycott moves into its fourth month, the Negroes of Montgomery, Alabama, continue to teach the nation. Their lesson is clear and insistent. If any section of our country, any portion of our population, ignores this lesson or accepts its meaning lightly, it will move in darkness and ignorance in the coming years. For by their deliberate concerted resistance, unprecedented in our history, the Negroes of Montgomery give us knowledge we will need to face the problems we must live with for decades.

It is unfortunately true that racial segregation is a burden that America will know for many years. We cannot, as a nation, easily throw it off. We have labored under this burden for too long. Our stooped, distorted posture has become familiar to us and we have cherished it. Now, increasingly conscious of our deformity, we would stand erect, but cannot. Our joints and sinews, forced to move in unwonted patterns, shriek in protest. The process of learning and unlearning is painful.

As the issue of segregation bites more deeply into the national conscience, the opportunities to decry obvious injustices will grow greater, not less. It will take both courage and prudence to avoid answering hysteria with added hysteria, violence with greater violence. In a recent issue of *Life*, Mr. William Faulkner attested that those who think it possible to *impose* integration without violence do foolishly delude themselves.

"The Northerner, the liberal, does not know the South," he wrote. "He can't know it from his distance. He assumes that he is dealing with a simple legal theory and a simple moral idea. He is not. He is dealing with a fact: the fact of an emotional condition of such fierce unanimity as to scorn the fact that it is a minority which will go to any length and against any odds at this moment to justify and, if necessary, defend that condition and its right to it."

Mr. Faulkner advised all groups that would force integration to stop for a moment to let the Southerner learn that "(1) Nobody is going to force integration on him from the outside; (2) That he himself faces an obsolescence in his own land which only he can cure."

For those who would like to accept and those who are afraid to believe these statements, the boycott in Montgomery is a lesson. When a Negro woman, Mrs. Rosa Parks, refused to give up her seat in the segregated bus lines of Montgomery last December, she was arrested. To show their approval of Mrs. Parks' action, the Negroes of Montgomery staged a boycott of the bus line. They often walked long miles to work, or pooled their resources to ride in private cars. The buses rolled, nearly empty, through the streets. The bus company felt the loss, the white citizens became more sharply aware of the deep resentment of the Negroes, while the Negros realized their own unity and the power of unified action. When a long-unused state law on conspiracy was invoked and almost one hundred Negroes were arrested, the Negroes showed their determined unity in a mass meeting. "The right to protest," they said, "is the glory of democracy." And they agreed that their protest should be "Christian and non-violent."

By this stirring and concerted action these Negroes teach the nation, and particularly the South, that the Negro in America is determined to assume his proper stature. They teach the nation, and particularly the North, what the Negro can do to bring about the cure of the obsolescence in our land. They teach the nation, and particularly other Negroes, the way to peaceful integration.

It is paradoxical that the Montgomery protest should show the glory of democracy. For it is in violence of democracy that we have segregation in our land. And it is against segregation that the Negroes of Montgomery are protesting. We must deeply regret that the Negro in America finds such a protest necessary, but we can be pleased that in America such a protest—such a moving, spirited protest—is possible. The Negroes of Montgomery have placed the nation in their debt. The nation can repay this debt only if they learn the lesson which the Montgomery protest has so profoundly taught.

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Mr. Dulles in Perspective

"WE LIVE IN A WILDERNESS IN WHICH THE KNIFE MAY BE HIDDEN BUT SELDOM SAFELY SHEATHED"

C. K. YEARLEY, JR.

HOPING for the containment of Germany's expanding power late in the last century, Joseph Chamberlain advised the British Foreign Secretary that the peril of the times required an "Act of Vigor." In effect he was forthrightly suggesting that the *Wilhelmstrasse,* then impinging upon British interests in Europe, South Africa, and the Pacific, should be shown a line the crossing of which would probably mean war. During an epoch when diplomacy was the honored profession of a cultivated elite, among a people who were practicing it with rare finesse, Mr. Chamberlain's advice and the bold course it proposed disturbed many men, but it shocked and surprised almost no one. Peace, even the long peace of the nineteenth century, was generally understood to be the by-product of political risk, and political risk implied the chance of conflict. Indeed, men responsible for conducting foreign relations everywhere recognized the amoral ambitions, irrational caprices, and international gambles of nation-states as cruel but omnipresent facts of life. Today for John Foster Dulles, just as for those men who have preceded him in the foreign ministries of the world and in the Department of State, these facts are, as they have always been, the essence of Realpolitik.

The evidence upon which the reputation of Secretary Dulles must rest is not all in. If we and Mr. Dulles can avoid global war, the separation of biographical wheat from chaff will be the leisurely, and one might hope, the calmer work of the next generation. Several things about him, however, are already reasonably clear. Mr. Dulles has revealed a set of mind remarkably like that of the power politicians of other days, and, when he thinks the occasion demands it, he is an ardent exponent of the act of vigor. Sensitive to the role of force in the dealings of nations, as his writings indicate, Mr. Dulles has always placed less faith in the efficacy of the United Nations as such than in the formation of regional military blocs within it. The Secretary's outspoken attempts to delineate the lay of our lines, his allusions to an agonizing reappraisal of our European policies, his threats of massive retaliation, and his vivid descriptions of our cavortings on the brink of war have provided subsequent illumination of his tough-mindedness and have provoked political melees at home and abroad. He has shocked and surprised many of his countrymen and, so it is charged, the people of our allies. Moreover, he has done little to lay the dust that swirls thick about him.

Allowing that much of the controversy draws inspiration from sources professionally partisan, it obviously goes beyond this and finds fuel among the interested, the curious, and the worried members of our thinking population. Opinions about the Secretary, as might be expected, range across the spectrum, but there are at least two broad assumptions upon which many viewpoints, for and against Mr. Dulles, appear to rest. First, widespread currency has been given the belief that Mr. Dulles' acts of vigor are rather original, and, second, it is assumed that he has engineered a series of distinctive turns in the heading of American foreign policy. Whatever the reasons that nourish our wishes, neither impression is substantial or even substantially correct; each is dangerously misleading.

IF VIEWED with a modicum of detachment, the career of the Secretary of State should remind us, in this age of miracles, of the central tragedy of our time. For Mr. Dulles has not launched us anew and he does not represent a notable break with the past. Even as a personality he is hardly a novelty. In terms of character he would appear to belong among a number of forceful, if not always great, Secretaries of State, whose diplomacy was strenuous, whose words in time of peril, real and imaginary, were acidulous and pithy. Even within the ambit of his own experience, Mr. Dulles can assuredly recall the Rooseveltian philosophy of the "Big Stick," Robert Lansing's fulminations against the Kaiser's Germany, and Cordell Hull's excoriation of Japanese policy many months before Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Yearley is a member of the History faculty at the University of Florida.

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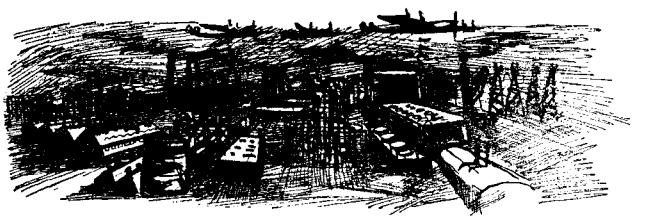
The instruments of diplomacy that Mr. Dulles is obliged to wield are hand-me-downs, and the balance of power situation in which they must be employed is as old as the nation-states. Perhaps there has been, as some have told us, a revolution in American foreign policy during the last decade. But if this is true, it is a revolution in the degrees of our participation in world affairs, not in the fundamental methods by which we work. Power for us, as for all states, is still the major determinant in international politics. Now, as for half a millennium among ethicless states, the one really relevant question as they meet each other across boundaries is *whose* might makes right. In the struggle for survival and the competition for advantage, Mr. Dulles, however reluctantly, is wedded to the traditional expedients of political seduction, economic bargaining, and military threats.

At best, of course, the Secretary's main roles, like those of his predecessors, are complex and delicate ones. Under relentless pressure by what passes for public opinion to enunciate our policies clearly, he must remain, as Dulles has, politely evasive. He cannot, as Cordell Hull cautioned us eighteen years ago, "place before every government of the world a detailed chart of the course of policy which this country will or will not pursue under any particular set of circumstances." He must possess a facility with weasel words in order to retain freedom of maneuver and flexibility. There is no doubt that his pronouncements irritate many of us, yet we may find solace of sorts in realism. For words will not basically determine whether we can or cannot elaborate a *modus vivendi* with the Soviet bloc; an easing or stiffening of tension must proceed from deeper causes.

In this connection it is perhaps worthy of notice that Mr. Dulles' athletic expressiveness, tactless as it sometimes seems, is very unlikely to alienate our allies, although it may embarrass governments-of-the-moment. Like ourselves, our friends have also grown their rhinoceros hides. England, that half a century ago coolly fed pieces of China to competing powers in order to preserve her own vital stakes in India and Europe, that welded a power alliance with Japanese expansionists rather than a sentimental one with the United States, that barely yesterday bartered Czechoslovakia to gain a breathing spell, knows the realities of international affairs. France, which remembers Bonaparte, Talleyrand, and Clemenceau, is scarcely uninitiated; Germany, whose perverted and debased exploitation of force still burns in the memory of her own people and of Western man, is hardly a novice; nor is Italy, bigamously wed to both sides in two world wars. And the America that once called in the French to redress the balance against her own kinsmen, that now accepts the embrace of Franco and Tito, has long since come of age. Our occasional airs of innocence are betrayed by behavior that is all too professional. Needless to say, this is a matter of exposition rather than accusation, but it should underscore the fact that words and ideology are not controlling in the relation of states.

AS THE abrasive edges of Soviet imperialism grind into the soft spots of the world, the principles of the balance of power quite naturally dictate resistance to them. Mr. Dulles, who apparently has somewhat more responsibility than his recent predecessors in executing this policy, nonetheless did not inaugurate it any more than he or his next successor



will conclude it. One suspects that it matters relatively little precisely how a Secretary of State articulates such basic policy. The balance of power must mean containment, and containment, regardless of the weapons available, must mean the willingness to fight to the death. In the last two generations we have never stopped playing roulette with a pistol to our ear and we have never been away from the brink of war. In our case, like men whose houses are set in the side of a cliff, we have become inured to the prospects of a fall.

Having little more choice of method than all the men who have directed the diplomacy of a democratic state involved in the shifting currents of Realpolitik, Secretary Dulles must also exercise the utmost skill and resourcefulness at home as well as abroad. Since general public acquiescence to foreign policy is essential, if only for purely partisan reasons, issues must be made to appear in translation simpler than they are. Oversimplification can only offend the intellectual, but for the Secretaries it has a certain functional value. It makes possible the formation of a reservoir of evangelical fervor and emotionalism that can be filled and then tapped as the occasion demands. Mr. Dulles must contribute to the manipulation of politically strategic groups as well as the public-at-large, a task of stupendous magnitude considering the confusion, indifference, and ignorance of a substantial portion of the population.

Viewing this manipulative process over the course of decades, it is apparent that our Secretaries of State, in conjunction with other leaders, in order to further what they construe as our national welfare, have helped direct opinion so that allies of today are perceived as

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the enemies of tomorrow and vice versa. One might compare the metamorphosis of attitudes about Japan, Germany, Russia, and China over the past fifty or even the past fifteen years to become sensible of the twists and turns we have managed. Mr. Dulles consequently speaks in the context of a venerable art when, seeking to buttress policy, he calls for a renascence of "the kind of crusading spirit of the early days of the Republic," a period in which we were proud of what we had and "knew the rest of the world needed it." Thus, in a sense, does he continue the myth-making, spellbinding, and witchery, and strangely these things still pass as principles.

Despite differing nuances, the general orientation of Dulles' diplomacy remains, as it has been throughout the periods of our active international relations, unmistakably European. Few men with integrity of purpose, and this includes the vast majority of Congressmen, have claimed that our most vital interests lie elsewhere. We have been compelled since 1945, it is true, to salvage what we could of the balance of power that we were obliged to upset in Asia. Yet maintenance of the European bulwark against Soviet expansionism, shielding Europe's manpower, resources, and industrial potential from monopolization by another power are our cardinal objectives in 1956 just as they were in 1941 and 1917.

A Sovietized Europe, even a Soviet-dominated Germany, would obviously mean an irrevocable tipping of the balance of power. Small wonder Dulles has made only six trips to the Far East in the last three years and over thirty to Europe, or that SEATO is such a weak reflection of NATO. To be sure, events emergent from the situations in China, Korea, and Indochina have registered heavily on the Secretary and the rest of us. Past experience and recent practice, nevertheless, probably serve to confirm him in the belief that Asia is the back alley of European politics. We do not now know how European commitments figured in his desire to reach an armistice in Korea, but European, as well as Republican Party, obligations must have counted very heavily.

WHILE Secretary Dulles has moved well within the confines of our established European policies, his admirers, and some of his opposition, argue that he has dug new channels and set the currents flowing on a new course in the Far East. At best, these arguments, regardless of one's stand, appear to be remarkably ill-founded. In any event they are assuredly premature. It may be wiser to pay a decent respect to history. Prisoners of the past are less likely to reach their goals if they ignore their shackles.

Probably there is no area of the world in which the hand of the past is clamped more powerfully on the Secretary's course of action than in Asia. Nowhere else over the past half century has American policy been so markedly the offspring—not of vital interest—but of parochial greed, sentimental delusion and naïve enchantment. Almost without dissent our most distinguished students of foreign relations are agreed that the acquisition of the Philippines, issuance of the Open Door Notes, interference in the Russo-Japanese War, flirtations with consortium politics in China, and acquiescence to a series of ambiguous agreements with Japan represented down until World War II a long concatenation of blunders. Nor did the imbroglio end with V-J day. Subsequent analyses of what Herbert Feis called the China Tangle are ample indications that having once seized the wolf by the ears we have not dared to let him go, that mistakes so deeply rooted, irrespective of who leads the State Department, are not to be exorcised away. Indeed, as the masses of Asia stir and stope towards their goals, inherent limitations of our foreign policy are pitilessly laid bare.

The diplomacy of John Foster Dulles, whatever labels are judged appropriate for it, does not and cannot represent a radical departure from our past. No matter what great opportunities or cheerful alternatives we may seize upon during the passage of the next century, it is sufficient to note here that the United States and the rest of the world's powers have not been able or willing to cast off the garments of the past.

Under present circumstances, it is not difficult to guess why language and acts cast in the mold of Machtpolitik jar the sensibilities of men of good will. Borne along on a flood tide of prosperity we drink our bellyfull from an ocean. Fat and cushioned we see also the chance to be content and at ease. Instead, no matter how the Secretary-of-the-moment speaks his message, we are ceaselessly pricked to an awareness of the wastelands beyond our door. We are reminded that we live, despite the diversions of the cocktail hour and the Comedy Hour, in a wilderness in which the knife may be hidden but seldom safely sheathed.

One does not have to subscribe to deterministic philosophies or walk in lock-step with Hegel to conclude that Secretary Dulles and the men who make or execute foreign policy labor under binding historical restrictions. As George Kennan has wisely warned us in a recent address, we are unhappy heirs to outworn diplomatic machinery, consigned in the Atomic Age to the role of tinkerers. Those who soothe us with assurances that the past three years have brought a new model of diplomacy, tuned and overhauled, make a mockery of the facts. They not only do injustice to all of our recent Secretaries of State, but they obscure the tragic problems that now confront us.

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STOCKHOLM PREMIERE

O'Neill's Long Journey

STEPHEN WHICHER

IN ACCORDANCE with the dying wish of Eugene O'Neill, his last play, *Long Day's Journey Into Night,* was given its world premiere in Stockholm by *"Dramaten,"* a group which has gained an international reputation for its distinguished productions of O'Neill plays over a period of thirty years. Their superb presentation of his "last letter to the world" makes clear that it is a *play,* and not a memoir cast in dialogue form as it has been characterized by certain American reviewers of the book.

It is true, as these reviewers point out, that the work has a great deal of autobiographical interest and emphasis. The Tyrone family which it depicts is O'Neill's own, and the story which he lays bare, a story of "the damned," is true to the facts as we know them. Furthermore, the mood of this last play is the same as that which dominates many of his earlier, largely autobiographical works—the mood of homelessness, the sense of helplessness, the death-longing, the constant background of the "ole davil, sea" which marked the plays of the S. S. Glencairn group, *Anna Christie, Beyond the Horizon* and, with varying disguises, *The Straw* and *All God's Chillun Got Wings.*

The significant fact, however, is not that the work contains autobiographical elements, but that O'Neill has transcended them so completely. The undeniable impact of its current Swedish production, for example, certainly cannot be explained by the self-revelation which the play contains. Audiences are not sitting on hard seats night after night, absorbed in this play for over four hours, just because it gives them information about O'Neill. Nor does its autobiographical element explain my own reaction. Starting with a prejudice against O'Neill, and watching its first performance with no knowledge of the play, I found my attention held from first to last, and was moved as one can only be, I would suppose, by real drama. Since then I have studied the English text of the play and have gone back to the stage production to find it just as gripping. If our definitions of tragedy do not fit this work, we should perhaps rethink our definitions.

For this reason, I can not agree with those critics of the play who speak of O'Neill's inability to cut, as if we had another *Look Homeward, Angel* on our hands. I predict that any future Maxwell Perkins who tries to cut this to the limits of an ordinary play will find that it can not be done.

The play as a whole is a solid, sinewy, exceptionally well-built piece of work. O'Neill has left us a big, powerful Something, like a yacht in the living room, which can't and won't be dismissed. Whether we think it ought to or not, this play does prove itself by the only proper test for a play: performance. It is gripping and moving theater.

THAT BEING the fact, we need to ask why, for it has several massive faults which should have destroyed it. It austerely ignores almost every means, including action, by which the usual play interests an audience. As Joyce, Proust, and Woolf have written novels that abandon story, so this is a tragedy that abandons "drama," and, further, it makes its journey on the usual square wheels of O'Neill's style, although some speeches are eloquent in context.

Furthermore, the fact remains that he asks actors to sustain and audience to respond to *one* emotion—helpless grief at hopeless loss—for nearly five hours. For all his skill and that of his interpreters, that is asking a great deal; by all rights it should have been much too much.

One reason why it is not is the play's masterly construction. Is there a *tour de force* like this in modern drama—a play that sustains mounting tension through so much talk and so little action, with no fantasy, spectacle, poetry, or play of ideas to help it on? In *Death of a Salesman* Arthur Miller uses flashbacks that contrast present and past with dramatic sharpness. A book that comes close to O'Neill's play in theme and mood, Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury,* dazzles the reader with its juggling of the time sequence. O'Neill, hewing to the line of strict naturalism, foregoes all this, so that the past can enter his play only as narrated in the present. Yet the past is his subject, or a large part of it. The way he has solved a problem which no other dramatist would have attempted is a revelation of O'Neill's dramatic craft.

The chief reason for the play's success, however,

Mr. Whicher, a member of the faculty of Swarthmore College, is teaching this year in Sweden.

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is the character portrayal. James and Mary Tyrone are two of the richest roles in dramatic literature. The whole interest of the play is in its character revelation. Its excitement consists in feeling ourselves penetrate steadily deeper into the lives of this family until we reach the full "pity, understanding and forgiveness for *all* the four haunted Tyrones" with which the author wrote. He not only makes us see, he makes us care; we value these people as they value each other. Nothing has impressed Swedish audiences more than the play's warmth. O'Neill has shown force and insight in other plays, but never this love and compassion for his characters.

Beyond the deep human interest, however, is the tone and mood of the whole, what we must call the religious dimension. O'Neill has constantly tried in his plays to treat the "big subject," the Mystery beyond human life. One can argue that this is what has spoiled some of his work. Here he succeeds; he is not soft, as in *Moon for the Misbegotten,* nor abstract, as in *Lazarus Laughed* or *The Iceman Cometh.* An awareness of life as a mysterious shaping force, a vague dark enemy like the Boyg in *Peer Gynt,* rises quietly and naturally from the human situation and gives it tragic stature.

A word must be said of the chief device used to give this effect, the foghorn. Perhaps this "sick whale in the back yard"—which the Swedes, not having our Moby Dick reflexes, translated "sick elephant"—seems over-obvious in the reading. As handled by *"Dramaten,"* however, that living yet inhuman voice in the background of the last two dark acts, punctuating and commenting on the action and calling us back, as it does the characters, to the thought of the fog and sea around us, has sometimes almost intolerable power. Of all the remarkable sound effects in O'Neill's plays, this is the finest.

BUT THE catharsis of *Journey* is not to be achieved by a trick. In this work O'Neill passes his final judgment on the life he escaped—surely with relief —three years ago. As the night and fog close in, the characters struggle toward honesty, helped on by whiskey, which O'Neill uses here as elsewhere as a kind of truth serum. What they reach is hopeless resignation, helpless love, and a longing for death. Man can live by illusions, O'Neill says, and he can live by faith, which is probably the same thing, but ultimately neither is any good. The most poignant effect of the play is the counter-movement by which the mother retreats into illusion while the others move to a clear sight of truth. But she knows too: "There is no other way I can stop the pain—*all* the pain." Nor can faith help. The father's Catholic belief is "bog trotter" superstition, scornfully rejected by his sons, who quote *Zarathustra*: "God is dead." The mother's dream of recovering her innocent convent-girl's trust in the Virgin is pathetically futile. One call of the foghorn refutes her.

The climax of the play is Edmund's long speech in the fourth act about the "high spots" in his memories. "For a moment I lost myself—actually lost my life. I was set free! . . . For a second there is meaning! Then the hand lets the veil fall and you are alone, lost in the fog again, and you stumble on toward nowhere, for no good reason!" Remembering O'Neill's long effort to assert some "meaning," ending with the "electrical display" of *Strange Interlude,* we can hear the sick older man summing up his life through the mouth of his younger self. "I will always be a stranger who never feels at home, who does not really want and is not really wanted, who can never belong, who must always be a little in love with death!"

It may be that *Long Day's Journey Into Night* has succeeded in Sweden because this heartsick pessimism goes down easier here than it would in the United States. Anywhere it makes a strange tragedy. If we accept, for example, Francis Fergusson's formula for drama, that it begins in purpose and works through passion to perception, then we have to say that purpose survives here only as a long-abandoned illusion, that perception is essentially complete early in the play, and that nearly all we have is four acts of agony. This is, rather, a play of discovery, like *Oedipus,* but of discovery for the audience only; the characters have little left to discover.

Yet this may be *the* modern tragedy. In its passivity, its despair, its longing, its undramatic reduction of human life to meaningless suffering, and its agonized honesty, it strikes a keynote of our modern mood. If we are to write honestly, this is what we must face. If we are to work through to something more "positive," this is what we must overcome. O'Neill's journey is also our own.

LINES
AT THE DEATH OF A CHILD
(For B. N.)

I cannot celebrate
Your waxen child
Or tell his certain fate
To which a Mass of Angels

Sings him at the church:
My voice is for his mother
Who grieves and buries one
Saint so heavy with another.

JOHN LOGAN.

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THE STAGE

A LADY OF QUALITY

MISS ENID BAGNOLD, whose play "The Chalk Garden" is flourishing with an ample grace at the Barrymore, has seemed always to me an unacknowledged mistress of English fiction. Her books, though few, hold with a granite force, and upon each is a personal signature as absolute as that of Miss Bowen or Miss Compton-Burnett. The celebrated *Serena Blandish,* with its lapidary perfection of cut, and the morning fresh *National Velvet* are two of these—yet each is a kind of "sport," a unicorn in the garden of the contemporary novel. Miss Bagnold's more subtle preoccupations are finely displayed in *The Happy Foreigner,* her most touching yet wiry tale of first love; in *The Squire,* a singular, key book, built about the experience of pregnancy; and latterly in *The Loved and Envied,* one of the very few novels of recent years, to employ Mrs. Woolf's phrase, written for grown-up people.

What is the sinewy thread which binds these three books into unity? In his introduction to *The Girl's Journey,* an omnibus volume of Miss Bagnold's fiction, Mr. Arthur Calder-Marshall finds it quite rightly in an attitude to experience, what he chooses to call a kind of stoicism—a perception of the natural loneliness of the human condition, despite its moments of rare intimacy—coupled with an audacious rushing forward to encounter the particular glory offered by the experience of youth, maturity, old age. Yet that movement, as we sense it, is oblique, elliptical—the climate of worldliness obscures it. For to the figures of Miss Bagnold's imagination, the world has given richly, and now the world is taking away. Mrs. St. Maugham of "The Chalk Garden," to instance a case in point—and in her play, Miss Bagnold potently dramatizes what, in her fiction, is suggested by the slow accretion of detail—Mrs. St. Maugham is "a Whig woman, salty, selfish, born to command, at home with life . . . a great lady, indifferent as to whether she is coarse or fine." Age has bested her but not time: flippantly, without remorse or nostalgia, she contemplates the splendid past—yet, perhaps, *not* past, possessed as it is in the present of her steely and irrefrangible arrogance. Dullness alone—of mind, sex, personality—rasps her: she has a taste for the exotic and the wonderfully odd: "such a waste," she cracks drily, "with all the chances of life, to want to be simple."

Miss Bagnold draws this figure—in all her remembered high Edwardian flush and zest of life—with the unimpeachable authority of brilliance. Yet alone, Mrs. St. Maugham would be merely gratuitous: she must have a foil: and here, with the flinty, enigmatic, imponderable Miss Madrigal, Miss Bagnold succeeds again boldly. She has with intent, one feels, made Miss Madrigal classless: stripped of the husks of convention and society and place, this potently anonymous figure may more intensely burn with the whitened flame of spirit in which Mrs. St. Maugham is to be tried. The two women circle about warily, each secure in her kingdom, then clash: not commonly—in a contest of will—but in the divine and desperate combat of truth: in them, the principles of time and eternity war behind the fine, hard screen of the social world. "The play blushes at the largeness of its aims," Miss Bagnold has written. "It holds up a fan to its face. It speaks in light terms. Things garnered from life have had to be slipped in sideways." But the harvest has been rich: Miss Bagnold offers here a most subtle articulation of moral experience, the more telling because it runs counter to our egalitarian prejudices in its overt preoccupation with spaciousness and excellence, with the resonance and wonder of personality—the salt, sting, savor of the supremely rare.

"The Chalk Garden," then, seems to me a play of the utmost audacity: exquisitely personal: poised in its intransigence as nothing has been in our theater since "The Cocktail Party." Wit it has, but always in the service of truth; piquancy too, but as a flavor and fragrance, not a spice. Miss Bagnold's control of her conventions is absolute: one notes, for example, the delicacy with which she makes felt the symbolic force of the imagery of gardening with which the play is dense, yet keeps it tangible too, as a humorous and even poignant motif. And all of these particular beauties are marked in Mrs. Irene Mayer Selznick's most distinguished production of "The Chalk Garden": in Mr. Albert Marre's fluent and stylish, though never mannered, direction; in Mr. Cecil Beaton's dresses and decors, which suggest but do not labor the note of wit. I cannot imagine a more adroit ensemble than that gathered at the Barrymore. As yet another of Miss Bagnold's bizarre domestics, Mr. Fritz Weaver gives a wonderfully quirky exhibition, all angles and fantastication. Miss Betsy von Furstenberg tellingly registers the fey presence her role demands. But Miss Gladys Cooper and Miss Siobhan McKenna preempt the foreground with two performances of a musical purity and balance: the first with her finely bred glitter and grace of elegance, her resplendent glamor and beauty—one might almost say—of class; the latter with her fierce, lowering integrity, and sudden elevations into an intense spiritual illumination. From the center of their roles, which each has focused unerringly, Miss Cooper and Miss McKenna explore the full dramatic range of "The Chalk Garden": Miss Bagnold could not have wished for her rare and

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particular vision to be articulated with more eloquence and passion.

I might add that the text of "The Chalk Garden" is available from Random House, and that the play, in this form, exhibits what may ultimately give it a kind of permanent life: the power to exist alone, and with a tangible vitality, in the hard perfection and luster of its language. (*At the Barrymore.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

WHAT ARE PATTERNS FOR?

THIS WEEK brings two thoughtful films which provide both absorbing drama and stimulating argument. The first, "Patterns," succeeds not only in building up tremendous suspense, but also in developing a strong emotional impact. A heartless ogre of business (played to steely perfection by Everett Sloane) wants to discard a nice old executive (played with warmth by Ed Begley) who has been giving his all to the Ramsey Corporation for some forty years. Van Heflin, blowing hot and cold in a brilliant performance as the new executive ostensibly hired because he's a production genius, strikes up a friendship with Begley right away, but knows that he must also stay on good terms with Sloane if his own future is to be secure.

Of course, Van Heflin wants Begley's job—if that's what he was hired for; he won't, however, knife the man to get it. But Sloane will. He won't fire him: one doesn't do that with a top executive in a large corporation. He will, instead, goad the elderly man, humiliate him, make it unpleasant for him at board meetings—until Begley will be driven to resign. Begley refuses to be driven.

"Patterns," which appeared first as a successful TV play, is equally successful as a movie—thanks to the good script of Rod Serling, who also wrote the original, and to the excellent direction of Fiedler Cook, both of whom contribute so much to make us see the characters as real people, not just as types who are all-black or all-white. Although "Patterns" doesn't really answer the question of whether or not only the tough survive in big business, it does present the problem provocatively, and Michael Myerberg has given the film a first-rate production, with good camerawork, fine sets and a cast of actors who lend to the film the excitement of splendid acting. Outstanding in supporting roles are Elizabeth Wilson as Begley's secretary, who is crushed by Sloane's treatment of this kind man; Beatrice Straight as Van's wife, who wants her husband to have the job but also wants him to keep his integrity; and Joanne Roos as Sloane's efficient, well-groomed, all-wise secretary. The fascination of "Patterns" continues long after the rousing climax, a sort of Aristotelian catharsis in which Van tells off Sloane, and the ambiguous finale, which leaves you wondering who has won: Van, who hopes to right some of the wrongs done in the name of the business god, or Sloane, who got what he wanted and can probably mold Van into the pattern of the "successful" executive.

THERE IS no doubt as to who wins at the end of "The Last Hunt." Certainly not the hunted buffalo, which were already on the wane at the close of the last century in the Wild West where this exciting picture takes place. Nor the Indians, who by this time were already starving on the reservations in which the thoughtless whites had fenced them after killing off so many of their buffalo. And not the wanton hunter (represented in this film by Robert Taylor as a ruthless killer) who mows down buffalo, Indians and even some of his associates with a frenzy that is both meaningless and evil. The triumphant survivor is the real settler of the West (played with strength and calm by Stewart Granger) who has had enough of killing and wants to "live peaceful." Although he deplores the dwindling of the buffalo, he joins the crack-shot Taylor on this last hunt with the hope of making enough on hides to stock a ranch and settle down.

The expedition also includes a hard-drinking, peg-legged skinner (played to the hilt by Lloyd Nolan), a young half-Indian (Russ Tamblyn) who has plenty of cause to hate Taylor, and an Indian girl (Debra Paget) with a baby who are added to the group after Taylor kills off their men folk. Not for children, although an outdoor action picture, "The Last Hunt" is remarkably adult in its characters and themes. The scene in which Granger returns to town to sell the hides and gets into a saloon fight is a cinematic rarity —an all-out brawl that has a psychological motivation. But I wish that Richard Brooks, who directed the film so well and wrote its thoughtful script (from Milton Lott's novel) had also given more motivation and background to the sinister character played by Taylor.

"The Last Hunt" abounds in atmosphere. Dore Schary's fine production, with outstanding photography (shot mostly at Custer State Park, N. D.) in CinemaScope and Eastman Color, the good cast and plenty of buffalo (dead and alive) would please even Remington, whose famous drawings must have inspired many a scene.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

"A COLUMNIST'S LOT"

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editors: "Damn it all, quit using rough language," said the educator to his child, lovingly patting his back into Alpine depressions. Similarly: "Why do so many defend their position as officially Catholic when they know that only I dare give the doctrine of the Pope?" implies Mr. McDonald in The Commonweal.

The article "A Columnist's Lot" [Feb. 10] demonstrates very ably the danger of making "official Catholicism" a political label. But this appeared not so much in the criticism of the writer's foes as in his own assumptions—that "selfish nationalism," for instance, is merely the Italian way of spelling "Knowland," or that "peace" is the Pope's abbreviation for "the Krushchev co-existence overtures." Mr. McDonald has certainly never found (as he claims) "A Catholic press . . . in which criticism of political immorality is not tolerated" and which "actually take(s) up the cudgels for . . . 'selfish nationalism.'" If he thinks some are defending selfishness or immorality under the mistaken belief that they do just the opposite, he must realize that this is his interpretation of their actions; that he must substantiate the interpretation, not brand the actions as obvious and admitted heresy condemned by the Pope.

Perhaps it is the "columnist's lot" to be burned at the stake by witch-hunters, but Mr. McDonald goes too far when he chooses the sacred and inverted stake of St. Peter for his particular martyrdom. This stand is made especially dubious when it appears in a magazine famous for its attack on the wanton abuse of religion to support specific political figures and platforms. The Commonweal has tried to open free debate in the Church, to avoid the so-called "debate" wherein every set of Catholics zealously informs the rest that they are not Catholics. If Mr. McDonald is always so true to the public stand of his publishers, his seven outlets seem due for further restriction.

Had we no fear of easy equivocation, we could use in practical politics (and mail around) as many quotes from the Vatican as Mr. McDonald does—quotations on the dangers of false liberalism, on the misuse of the word "freedom," on the real nature of Communist methods; we could naively think that all these applied without further distinction to Mr. McDonald's stand, and pose as indignant defenders of the Pope against "sick" Catholic journalists. Admittedly, this would be naive. But it is precisely the naivete of Mr. McDonald when he boldly uses non-political, supra-national pleas for peace and world cooperation to erect not only a Catholic, but *the* "Papal" view on the specific and highly involved policies of one among hundreds of different nations addressed by the Holy Father of them all.

But perhaps it is vain to hope for a careful following of the words "peace" and "freedom" through the philosophical labyrinths of today by one who cannot make a simple distinction between McCarthy and racism. The columnist rightly says those who think only the Daily Worker (and its secret minions) can sincerely support "internationalism" are drastically in need of enlightenment. But are they any more befuddled than those who think only pamphleteers for Gerald L. K. Smith can support a MacArthur or McCarthy? Who is enlightening whom? Even observers on Mr. McDonald's side of the political fence (like Leslie Fiedler, in *An End to Innocence*) have warned fellow anti-McCarthy men to avoid the absurdity of thinking all foes racist and fascist.

At any rate, if light is ever to be cast in these areas, it will be by men arguing on the claims of each issue, not by those who call disagreement "persecution," and represent writers who attack General MacArthur as martyrs of Christian (no—Catholic) charity. We feel sure that there are many, who—like us—far from feeling persecuted, would welcome attack. We are so tired of watching Gerald L. K. Smith be demolished by encyclicals—(for one thing, it's such a waste of heavy artillery)—in some hinterland of mythical McCarthyism. A political view is not identified as lunacy by attacking only the lunatics among those who support it—(as Hamlet says, "who should then 'scape whipping?")—and there are whole colonies of us whose arguments have not only never been refuted, but never discovered in the hue and cry over "warmongers" and "freedom-haters."

When all the lunatics have been beaten to death with typewriters, and a set of men is found who, while hating neither Negroes nor freedom nor the See of Rome, yet have political problems not solved by the simple formula "Against selfishness and for the Pope,"—then real debate will have begun. Seeking together to "flesh" the Pope's ideals in the turmoil of political reality, we will stop questioning the desire of our neighbor for order and peace and freedom, and go on to ask: What *is* freedom?—limitation of all Catholic views to Mr. McDonald's? What is "cooperation" when one deals with Russia or with homebrew Communists? When *does* nationalism merely mean selfishness, and when does it mean *identity?* When does internationalism cease to mean the meeting of minds and traditions and thoughts (enriched by mutual contact), and become the dissolution of different minds into one mindlessness, of many philosophies into one confusion? These problems, latent in every political decision today, admit no facile solutions; they are certainly too momentous for anyone to

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"excommunicate" the answers of fellow-Catholics—or of any who know their import. The best way to combat some wild charges of political disloyalty is not to cast wilder doubts on religious loyalties. By all means speak freely, Mr. McDonald, but close no Papal doors on the freedom of others.

GARRY WILLS, S.J.
FRANK B. HIGGINS, S.J.

REPLY

Davenport, Iowa.

TO the Editors: (1) I did not say that all McCarthyites are racists and anti-Semites: I said that that virus is present but that "the extent" of it is "perhaps an unanswerable" question.

(2) I did not advocate closing "Papal doors on the freedom of others" in the Catholic press; I did ask that McCarthyism, Brickerism, "selfish nationalism," etc., not be presented by some editors in the "official" Catholic press as implied articles of Catholic faith.

(3) Pope Pius XII's many addresses on international problems are not the "non-political," vague and unspecified "pleas for peace" which readers Wills and Higgins think they are. I refer to, among others, Pius XII's April, 1951 address to members of the World Movement for World Federal Government in which he said that nothing is more in conformity with the traditional teaching of the Church than "an effective political organization of the world." I refer to his December, 1953 address to the Union of Italian Catholic Jurists in which he declared that world government corresponds to a fundamental need in the nature of man and international society. I refer to his two October, 1953 addresses on world law and a world medical code in which he reaffirmed his teaching. These, of course, are anathema to those American Catholics who are fellow-traveling with the Brickers and the Jenners and the McCarthys and the Eastlands. Vast numbers of American Catholics are not even aware that Pope Pius XII has been saying these things because certain diocesan editors in the Bricker-Jenner-McCarthy axis have either refused to publish them or have cleverly minimized their significance. A study of these Papal documents will go a long way to help readers Wills and Higgins answer the questions in their letter: questions dealing with the distinction between true and false nationalism and the real meaning of internationalism.

(4) I *have* found a Catholic press unfaithful to the teachings of Pope Pius XII on international life. To treat of *that* problem would require another article which I will be pleased to write for The Commonweal or any other publication which wants it.

DONALD MCDONALD.

"THE USES OF GAELIC"

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The indignant Irishman who insisted that Mr. Greene's waitress ["The Uses of Gaelic," Feb. 17] was "born and bred to" a language which she said she did not know reminds me of others I met in Ireland. After spending ten months in West Kerry learning Irish, I visited relatives in New Castle West, Co. Limerick, and a woman there tried to give me the impression that everyone there could speak Irish. I only met two Irish speakers there and this woman was not one of them. . . .

I met people who opposed and supported the compulsory teaching of Irish but their abilities or inabilities to speak it did not seem to affect their sentiments very much. . . .

But the program of compulsory Irish *is* producing an increasing number able at least to read Irish for the present generation is buying more books and publications in Irish than ever before. *An Club Leabhar,* an Irish language book club, a private enterprise, has over 60,000 members and that is a good number for a small country like Ireland.

This generation supports an Irish language weekly, *Inniu,* which did not exist before the last war, and the monthly *Comhair,* which corresponds closely to The Commonweal, is published by university students. Mairtin O'Cadhain, perhaps the greatest writer in Irish today, is not of the older generations nor is Seán O'Riordáin whom many consider to be the greatest living Irish poet in any language. The popular writer Criostóir O'Floinn is a product of compulsory Irish in English-speaking Limerick. His parents know little more in Irish than their prayers. . . .

Economically Ireland cannot be free from England. But the intellectuals who write in *Comhair* or *Feasta* feel that English cuts them off from European culture as London predigests and screens it to her own insular taste and they feel that Ireland has no reason for a separate being unless she has a way of life and culture to preserve and that the "foreign ideologies" of the English-speaking world will soon destroy her. . . .

If the Irish cannot save their language and it becomes "the runic language" of all Ireland, I do not think the English-speaking people who then live in that island will have any more concern for Old Irish Studies than a Bostonian like Mr. Greene has for the culture and language of the aborigines of Massachusetts. In the meantime, it must be exasperating for the famous Irish professor to have the present generation turn away, if such is true, from the Old Irish Studies and instead write in Modern Irish which refuses to lie down and die according to schedule.

CONNOR P. HARTNETT.

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The Nature of Stalinism

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

THERE is no intellectual problem in the modern world less academic than that of the nature of Stalinism. Here is a social system which has been in existence for only a matter of decades, and because of this, each new fact about it has yet to be placed in the perspective of a long historical development. And yet, given this difficulty, there is still no question of analysis which is quite so politically immediate.

This has become quite apparent in the three years since the death of Stalin. The changes which have taken place since then—Beria's fall, ex-Premier Malenkov's consumer orientation, Mr. Khrushchev's rise, the "co-existence" line—have occasioned all sorts of judgments, most of them unconscious of their assumption. "The leopard doesn't change its spots," one side argues. And at another pole, there is the highly articulate Isaac Deutscher holding out the hope for a slow, democratic shift in the regime.

A new book from a member of the Russian Research Center at Harvard raises the pertinent theoretical questions in a more systematic fashion. *The Permanent Purge** by Zbigniew K. Brzezinski focuses its attention on an aspect of Stalinism so essential that one cannot assess his analysis without discussing the nature of the social system itself.

Probably the most important point to be made about Stalinism is that it is not simply another dictatorship, that one can't call it a tyranny and let it go at that.

Mr. Brzezinski discusses at least part of this fundamental proposition. He writes, "Old despotisms and absolutisms were in a sense highly conservative. Although frequently springing up as progressive and even revolutionary forces, they became almost by virtue of necessity essentially conservative once power was theirs. The essence of their existence was power . . . [but] totalitarian regimes attempt nothing less than to reshape and reconstruct not only social institutions but also the minds and outlook of the people."

The basis for the dynamic character of Stalinism is not, as Mr. Brzezinski suggests, accounted for simply by the existence of a technology denied to past tyrannies. It goes, I think, far deeper than that. What Stalinism has done is to bring forth a new social class, that of the bureaucracy. And this class has very real and positive interests in a dynamic development of Russia's production—it has its cars, its special stores, its spas, its *dachas*. It has created a new social system. This fact is of immediate political importance. For the Stalinist bureaucrats *are* opposed to capitalism; they *are* opposed to capitalist imperialism: their antagonism springs from a fundamental difference in the ways in which societies are organized. Because of this, they have been able to capture much of the revolutionary sentiment which is directed against the older capitalist ruling class, particularly in the underdeveloped areas of the world. The tragic factor is, of course, that their opposition to capitalist injustice is actually in the name of Stalinist injustice, that their anti-imperialism is imperialist.

This is the first, and most basic, fact about Stalinism: it represents the emergence of a new social system, a new ruling class, and it has a particular appeal in vast areas of the world which are in revolution.

THERMIDOR was that point in the French Revolution which marked the fall of Robespierre and the end of the Terror. It has come to stand for a more generalized notion, describing the period of reaction which always follows the initial surge of a revolution. But after Thermidor, the basic changes effected by the revolution—in France, the destruction of the *ancien régime*—are not abolished. In this sense, one cannot speak of Stalin as a Thermidorian, for he was a revolutionary in his own right, not simply the representative of reaction.

This fact can be seen in a table which Mr. Brzezinski includes in his book to summarize one aspect of the great purge of 1936-8. It tells of the changes in the composition of the Central Committee of the Communist Party between 1930 and 1939. At the 1930 Party congress, almost all members of the Central Committee dated their membership to 1917 or before. In 1934, this general proportion still held, but there were post-October additions. By 1939, a basic change had taken place. Well over half of the Party central committee dated their membership in the Party from after the Revolution.

*THE PERMANENT PURGE. By Zbigniew K. Brzezinski. Harvard. $4.75.

Mr. Harrington writes frequently on political and cultural matters for The Commonweal and other publications.

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At the time of the trials, many thought that they indicated a tremendous weakness in the Stalinist regime. This is the point which Mr. Brzezinski develops when he describes the purge as inherent in totalitarianism because the leadership "enjoying absolute power . . . is forced to use it because of the very fact that it has it. Having power makes it isolated; isolation breeds insecurity; insecurity breeds suspicion and fear; suspicion and fear breed violence." This certainly fits the situation of the Stalinists in the thirties, and it was assuredly an element in the purges which took place then.

But at the same time, there is a broader point to be made. The purges were not simply an expression of insecurity. They were also a movement in a massive revolution which was bringing a new ruling class to power; this violence was mid-wife to a new social system. Almost all connections with the revolutionary traditions of the past, of October, were destroyed. Not only the old Bolsheviks who had at one time or another fought Stalin, men like Bucharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, but even trusted members of Stalin's own faction were executed or disappeared, Kuibyshev, Ordjonikidze, Petrovsky, etc. By 1939, the triumph was assured. The new ruling class was absolutely dominant on the highest committee of the Communist Party, and since the Party owned the State, dominant throughout Russia.

AN ANALYSIS such as the one above has immediate political consequences when one tries to analyze the events since Stalin's death. Specifically, it would conclude that there have been obvious changes, but that these have clearly taken place within the framework of the new social system.

After World War II, the mass purge was much less in evidence. But there were, of course, still purges. The apparent rise of Zhdanov set off one series, Titoism another, the doctors' plot and the anti-Semitic campaign, more. And then with Stalin's death there was an apparent blunting of some of the most terroristic aspects of the regime. Titoism was accepted as a road to "socialism," Beria joined the long list of heads of the secret police, and so on.

It is impossible to account for these shifts with any precision. We simply do not have enough information. But, with all necessary qualifications, certain hypotheses can be put forward.

It is possible, for instance, that a paradoxical explanation lies at the base of the change: that Stalinism, as a social system, could not be considered complete until Stalin, the man, died. For under Stalin, power was ultimately vested in the will of a single man. All disputes were settled by his word. In such a situation, the interest and desires of the bureaucracy could only prevail as long as they were approved of by the dictator. With Stalin's death, this arbitrary and absolute element in the Stalinist power structure disappeared. This fact may well account for some of the changes.

Other factors may be at work. Even a totalitarian regime like Stalinism is subject to certain popular pressures. Indeed, some have found a certain rhythm in the Stalinist terror in which the "liberal" position becomes dangerous because it gives the people ideas about freedom and thus engenders a swing toward harsh repression, which itself then becomes dangerous because it calls forth a kind of passive resistance, and thus initiates a swing toward "liberalism." Even if this general pattern is not wholly accurate, various events must have given the Stalinist bureaucracy pause: East Germany, Vorkuta and the other labor camp uprisings, the persistent struggle of the peasants against the regime. These expressions of popular discontent may have forced the changes.

But a loosening of some of the most repressive aspects of Stalinism in no way means a basic change in the system. "Freedom" must be compatible with the continued rule of the bureaucracy. There may be, for example, a literary let-up so that certain criticisms against bureaucratic inefficiency can be put into Stalinist drama, but woe to the playwright who would attack the bureaucracy itself.

In this regard, Mr. Brzezinski is quite right in insisting that the purge is an essential feature of Stalinism as a social system. For as long as the minority ruling class of some eight million lives above the masses, coercion and terror will be necessary. And now that Stalin is dead, the purge is still required in the intra-party feuds, at least as a limiting factor on those who would take "liberalization" too seriously. With his recognition of this fact, and despite certain inadequacies in his presentation, Mr. Brzezinski has given us a worth-while study.

But the crucial fact with which I would close is this: that the most fundamental thing about Stalinism, both in internal policy and in foreign relations, is that it represents a new, and terrifying, social system, one with a strong ruling class which emerged from bloody struggles. Its minority position demands that it keep its weapons of repression and coercion, that shifts will take place within these limits, and nothing can be allowed to endanger the fundamental power of the bureaucracy.

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The Moral Burden of Mr. Greene's Parable

THE QUIET AMERICAN. By Graham Greene. Viking. $3.50.

By WILLIAM CLANCY

GRAHAM GREENE, it should by now be universally acknowledged, has one of the cleanest, most pointed prose styles of any novelist now writing in English. It should be acknowledged too that as a master of the narrative technique —as an arranger of time, a manipulator of detail and conjurer of atmosphere—his position is preeminent. The publication of *The Quiet American* calls for a third acknowledgment: Mr. Greene, in spite of the illusion of realism his work imparts, is primarily, and inveterately, a moralist. Behind his art there always lurks a parable. When the chips are down, at moments of crisis, his characters speak a language that can be learned only in the Greene Theological School.

One of course suspected this before, and some of Mr. Greene's admirers, including myself, were dismayed by it. *The Heart of the Matter* raised some uneasy questions about what "religion" might be doing to Mr. Greene's talents, and *The End of the Affair,* with its (for many of us) intolerable retreat to the pseudo-miraculous, gave the questions an unhappy answer.

Now, we are told, Mr. Greene has put aside supernatural themes to write a series of "non-religious" novels, of which *The Quiet American* is the first. It may be, but only superficially. Priests and confessionals are absent from its Indochinese setting, but it tortures over the same moral problems as did Mr. Greene's earlier works. This book may speak with a secular accent, but its meaning is not limited to this world. Its narrator, the English journalist Fowler, does not believe in God, but he talks about Him a good deal of the time, and at the very end of the story, after the sins have been irreparably committed, he complains: "How I wish there existed someone to whom I could say that I was sorry."

Fowler, like all the characters in Mr. Greene's world, has a besetting sin. Selfishness. "I know myself," he says, "and I know the depth of my selfishness." But like any besetting sin in Mr. Greene's world, Fowler's selfishness takes unusual, complex turns: "I cannot be at ease (and to be at ease is my chief wish) if someone else is in pain. . . Sometimes this is mistaken by the innocent for unselfishness, when all I am doing is sacrificing a small good [his immediate convenience] for the sake of a far greater good—a peace of mind—when I need think only of myself."

One of the "innocent" who so mistakes it is Alden Pyle, the "quiet American" of Mr. Greene's title. Pyle is a young American, fresh from Harvard, who comes to Indochina as a member of the U.S. Economic Aid Mission. And Pyle is an idealist. He wants to "fight for liberty." When Fowler first meets him he thinks: "Perhaps only ten days ago he had been walking across the Common in Boston, his arms full of books he had been reading in advance on the Far East and the problems of China. . . . He was absorbed already in the dilemmas of democracy and the responsibilities of the West; he was determined—I learned that very soon—to do good, not to any individual person, but to a country, a continent, a world. Well, he was in his element now, with the whole universe to improve."

For Fowler, such innocence is sentimental cant. *He* knows that the world cannot be "improved," that words like "democracy" and "honor" are mere traps to catch the unsophisticated. He is a reporter for a British paper and he writes of what he sees. But he is not engagé. Opium he finds comforting, and his mistress. Abstractions and ideals are for fools, uninitiates, the Pyles of the world.

That was Pyle's trouble: his abstract ideals, learned from some textbook. He had some notion about creating a Third Force in Indochina, and this led him to supply explosives to terrorists who, he hoped, would take over the country and set up a government on whom the United States could rely. The consequences of his meddling were disastrously bloody, and in the end there was no way out but to get rid of him. Fowler, to this end, connived in his murder. (As a result of the murder he got back the mistress whom Pyle—a rank amateur at illicit love—had temporarily lured away with naive American talk about children, home, and nation.)

Mr. Greene has written a parable of Americans Abroad and, one might legitimately complain, his parable has the faults that moralistic tales inevitably suffer from. Alden Pyle is a caricature, a mere foil for Fowler's — or Mr. Greene's — chagrin. Well-intentioned and stupid ("He was impregnably armored by his good intentions and his ignorance," Fowler observed), he can cause nothing but trouble wherever he happens to meddle, whether it be in politics or love. It is not on a political level, however, that *The Quiet American* has significance. Its parable is deeper than politics—or geography. As in all of Mr. Greene's novels, it concerns the moral life. Pyle, the innocent, dangerous American, and Fowler, the sophisticated, safe Englishman, represent, behind the polish of Mr. Greene's art, the vices and virtues of a morality play.

And it is here that Mr. Greene finally fails, as I believe he finally failed in *The Heart of the Matter* and *The End of the Affair.* The work does not come to terms with its own burden. It takes refuge in easy ways out. Pyle and Fowler, on a certain level, are brilliantly conceived, brilliantly executed. But this is not the level for which Mr. Greene is reaching—the lofty level of innocence, suffering and death. On this level they are not at home, nor could they be. They have no meaning in the Dostoievskian universe that Mr. Greene would probably like to create. They are, rather, mere mouthpieces for certain ideas constant in Mr. Greene's work. They interest us and amuse us and even, at times, move us. But they do not, in any ultimate sense, illuminate the darkness that Mr. Greene sees everywhere about.

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Ambitions and Vanities

THE DREYFUS CASE. By Guy Chapman. Reynal & Company. $5.

By JOSEPH M. DUFFY, JR.

SIXTY-TWO years ago Captain Alfred Dreyfus of the French Army, an Alsatian Jew, was convicted of high treason by a military court. In 1894 he was sentenced "to deportation for life to a fortified place, to forfeiture of his rank and degradation." It was the heaviest sentence that could be given. A half-century ago, seven years after a second military trial in 1899, Dreyfus's conviction was annulled. The soldier, who during the twelve years of his official disgrace had become the center of a national controversy, was restored to military rank and was decorated with the Legion of Honor.

The injustice insisted upon and the justice at last achieved are old stories now; in the meantime, having experienced so much, we should have become hardened to useless suffering, to the political nightmare, to justice forsaken. Fortunately this hardening of conscience has not taken place everywhere. In spite of our experience all reason has not become demented nor regard for the individual become fossilized. In France, if it achieved nothing else, the Dreyfus case, as a national memory at least, inspires skepticism of legal procedure against political defendants in the name of national security. There, as an example of this conscience, the Rosenberg trial was discussed more hotly and more knowledgeably among intelligent Frenchmen — including Catholic leaders—than it was in this country —especially among Catholic leaders. If it is fully understood, the Dreyfus case has a special appositeness for mid-century America.

The literature on the case has been substantial, and by far the greater part of it has been Dreyfusard. Too much of this literature has ranged from unseemly simplification by the politically pure in heart to crude distortion of the facts by political adventurers. Guy Chapman, formerly Professor of Modern History at the University of Leeds, has been engaged on a history of the French Third Republic. Out of this larger work he has brought forth the present volume as a separate study. *The Dreyfus Case* is an admirable book, a model of presentation of evidence on a controversial issue.

Mr. Chapman is a historian who does not regard lightly the responsibilities of his craft—to find out and to present clearly and completely as possible the facts about a past event. Approaching his subject without apparent bias, Mr. Chapman presents his findings with a formidable and convincing thickness of detail. Naturally, the book centers about Captain Dreyfus and those closely involved in his trial, but it also follows the ramifications outward into the political, religious, and intellectual life of France. *The Dreyfus Case* is a fascinating and appalling record: on the one hand it reads like a detective story where guilt and innocence are finally established; on the other hand it is like a tragic drama where guilt and innocence are ambiguously shared by a whole people. For the Dreyfus case turned out to be, not simply a personal ordeal, but a national failure.

Perhaps our greatest indebtedness to Mr. Chapman is for the estimable manner in which he disposes of the shibboleths and the cant which attached themselves to the case and which have remained there to spoil our view of the truth. Mr. Chapman rejects the charge of anti-Semitism among the military and of clerical influence. Anti-Semitism, he demonstrates, was not a shaping factor in the trials, and "clericalism," except in some minor instances, was a false issue raised by the anti-clericals. One of the author's favorite tactics is to acknowledge a familiar notion about the case and then to go beyond it to the truth with an "It may be so; but . . ." About the courts martial themselves, Mr. Chapman convincingly points out that the juries in each case came to a logical decision

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of guilty on the basis of the evidence at hand.

In retrospect, there are no melodramatically sinister villains about the case nor even a heroically victimized protagonist. Dreyfus himself is shown to have been a vain and ostentatious young soldier whose boasts, harmless at the time, helped to develop the case against him. A plotter such as Henry, the Statistical Section officer who fabricated information against Dreyfus, connived wildly not because he was malicious or desirous of personal gain but because he was unintelligently devoted to the Army he served. Esterhazy, the real traitor, was a fantastic and desperate man, but he was not so much an evil figure as a cad motivated throughout his life by wretched self-interest. As the case developed, an enormous number of characters swirled peripherally around the proceedings: lawyers, journalists, soldiers, politicians, intellectuals, all of them involved on one side or the other. Mr. Chapman describes them as they were, neither reduced nor inflated in stature—strong and weak, intelligent and stupid, honest and hypocritical, self-effacing and egotistic.

"History," Eliot wrote in "Gerontion," "has many cunning passages, contrived corridors/And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,/ Guides us by vanities." In *The Dreyfus Case* Mr. Chapman has explored the passages and gone down the corridors; he has observed ambitions and noted vanities. And he writes of all this neither with partisan passion nor yet with bleak disengagement. Instead he displays the compassion of an involved spectator who observes the past from the vantage point of a historian and with the sympathy of a human involved in history. He has shown how in this episode the error, the blindness, the misplaced loyalty of a few men finally affected the fate of a nation as well as of one man. If there is a lesson to be learned from history—one is never certain how practical such lessons are—the lesson of the Dreyfus case is the delusion of men who place institutions above individuals. It is the delusion of men who confuse their vested interests—material, spiritual, or intellectual—with the good of society. It is the delusion of men who at last find sullenness, suspicion, and hatred not at all incompatible with patriotic fervor. If there is a lesson to be learned from history, these are the reasons why the Dreyfus case is important for mid-century America.

To Renew Our Interest

MEDITATION BEFORE MASS. By Romano Guardini. Translated by Elinor C. Briefs. Newman. $3.

By J. N. MOODY

IN THE SUMMER of 1953 this reviewer attended the International Pax Romana Congress at Bonn and had an opportunity to note the universal respect for Monsignor Guardini among European intellectuals. His philosophical writings have assured him high respect among German Catholics. His work among University youth and his sermons in war-ravaged Berlin added affection to esteem. Lately he has won a wide circle of admirers in the United States with what the advertisements describe as "the number one Catholic best-seller," *The Lord,* and the less ambitious, *The Rosary of Our Lady*. He should win new friends with the present volume.

It must be stated at once that *Meditations before Mass* does not appear to have the classic dimensions of *The Lord*. The pace of Part One, which deals with the preconditions of our approach to the Mass, is slow. But as one goes on, the majesty of the author's theme emerges and his lucidity in theological exposition becomes apparent. All of what he has to say is helpful, but at his best he is magnificent.

The major contention of the book is that the Mass is the sacred action of Christ's community through which we fulfill the intention of Our Savior that we should live and act as a true community. The collection of individuals which enters a church must be transformed into a congregation, a "holy people" in the sight of God. To this end the walls of indifference, disregard, and enmity which separate us from "the others" must be broken down, so that all can be swept along on a surge of prayer toward God. But this congregation is not a closed circle of those united in the same building by common faith and mutual love. It extends over the whole earth to all who believe in Christ. It reaches beyond the borders of death to all who have "gone home" to God. It is the universal Church, the spiritual Christ, which offers the Mass and it is linked in love with those who have not as yet the gift of faith. To penetrate this mystery demands of the believer that he make a serious effort of preparation and concentration. Silence is needed, so that he can respond to the presence and to the Word of God. So, too, is composure, the creative *elan* of the mind. For all life is perpetual becoming and perpetual perishing; and the law of diminishing impressions will tarnish our appreciation of the sacred action if we do not renew our interest by means of meditation. This renewal is the purpose of the volume which places before us the fundamental considerations for a richer understanding of the Mass.

The writings of this learned German Catholic invite comparison with those of Monsignor Knox, another scholar with the gift of stating profound truth in understandable language. Both derive their power from a disciplined mind that makes its own the luxuriant treasures of the Faith. Each has facility with the homely illustration and the vivid word. The English translator of the Scriptures has a lighter touch than the German philosopher; but both can make the faith come alive in the minds of modern man. They make us conscious of the debt we owe to our European sharers in the faith who have added so much spiritual nitrogen to the still shallow soil of American Catholicism.

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A Record of Noble Failure

20 JULY. By Constantine FitzGibbon. Norton. $3.75.

By WILLIAM PFAFF

OF ALL THE 'ifs' of history, this fascinating book records what must be the most tantalizing. The small group of anti-Nazi German General Staff officers and conscience-hounded soldiers and civilians who attempted the assassination of Hitler were within feet, within a fluke, of success. They failed; but it was an astonishing and noble failure little known in this country, and in this book it is conscientiously recorded.

The driving force of the revolt was Count Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg, grievously wounded (he had one eye, one hand with 3 fingers on it, a damaged leg), 34 years old in 1944, a colonel on the General Staff. He set off the bomb on July 20, 1944. The man who was to assume state power and lead the post-Nazi government was Colonel-General Ludwig Beck. From 1937 until 1944 this former chief of the General Staff worked to overthrow the Nazis. Major General Henning von Tresckow, first operations officer of Army Group Center, determined in 1942 to kill Hitler. Major General Hans Oster—of German counter-intelligence, the *Abwehr*—decided that the Nazis must not win the war and from 1939 supplied information to the Allies. His prediction of the invasion of Holland and Belgium was so detailed that the Allies apparently judged it to be a plant and ignored it. He kept detailed records of Nazi crimes. Colonel-General Hoepner was prepared to march his Panzer division on Berlin at the time of Munich, while Beck and others arrested Hitler and his aides. General Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel: by midnight of July 20 he had *S-S* leaders in Paris jailed and was prepared to hold courts martial. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel: he joined the plot after his return from Africa. He wanted Hitler's arrest and trial, rather than an assassination, but if assassination were done he was prepared to stop all German resistance on the Western front and let the Allies through his lines. He was wounded three days before the bombing, and his successor was afraid to act.

Those are a few of the Army officers involved in the German underground. There were others: civilians—the Kreisau group in particular—officers, and troops willing to act against their government.

At the time of Munich the early plan for a coup failed when the Allies did not fight. In the summer of 1942 the German commander in France, Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben, agreed to invade Germany to overthrow the Nazis. He was retired before the plan could take form. In 1943 Tresckow put a bomb on Hitler's plane. The fuse burned, the firing pin fell, the detonator failed. Again in 1943 Colonel von Gersdorff—a colleague of Tresckow's—carried two bombs into the Berlin arsenal, prepared to blow himself up alongside Hitler. Hitler changed his scheduled appearance. In October 1943 a plan to put a bomb in Hitler's conference room failed. That same month a 24-year-old captain—Axel von dem Bussche—agreed to blow himself up while demonstrating a new uniform and pack before Hitler. The demonstration was postponed. In February 1944, 24-year-old infantryman Ewald Heinrich von Kleist agreed to make the second demonstration attempt. The demonstration was moved ahead after the bomb's fuse was set. The explosion occurred two hours after Kleist left Hitler. The next month a young orderly officer carried a revolver to a meeting with Hitler. He was stopped at the door. Those were some of the failures.

The most significant failure was July 15, 1944. Stauffenberg put a bomb in Hitler's conference room after sending the code word which set the revolt moving. He stepped out of the room to call Berlin and make sure everything was underway. He returned to the conference room to find Hitler gone. Troop

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movements into Berlin had to be stopped and explained away as a training alert. The conspirators put in a bad afternoon, and the memory of that afternoon was significantly influential in keeping them from acting decisively when the bomb did go off five days later.

The fatal day for the coup was July 20th; the conspirators had success in their hands even though the bomb failed to kill Hitler. They controlled Army Headquarters and military communications. They had broken off communications between Hitler's East Prussian headquarters and the outside world. They might have succeeded with the *coup d'état;* they had it within their power to open the Western front to the Allies. But the conspirators in Berlin hesitated for three hours, uncertain whether Hitler was really dead. When they finally acted, a pair of tactical flukes kept them from seizing the Berlin radio station before Hitler broadcast, and from securing their own military position at Army headquarters. But they issued orders to the German army to arrest all senior Nazi officials, all concentration camp guards, all *S-S* officers who failed to cooperate, and to occupy Gestapo offices, and disarm Gestapo and *S-S* troops who gave indication of resistance.

One thousand two hundred Gestapo and *S.D.* leaders were arrested in Paris (by troops described as in "high spirits"). Munich was taken over by anti-Nazi forces. Senior Nazi and *S-S* officials in Vienna were jailed. In other cities the conspirators hesitated or failed. And when Hitler made his broadcast the night of the 20th, it was all over for the revolt.

Beck and Stauffenberg were shot the night of the 20th. Stülpnagel was hanged. Hoepner was strangled with piano wire. Every person in Germany who bore the name of Stauffenberg was arrested. Other conspirators—or suspected conspirators—were arrested, tortured and probably killed. There were seven thousand arrests and five thousand executions.

One might leave this book, however, and ask the obvious question: what if the conspirators had succeeded? Unconditional surrender was more than a slogan to the West. After the murder of the Jews, the conquest of Europe, the crimes in occupied countries, unconditional surrender was the virtually unanimous goal of the Allied peoples. The German conspirators were acting to save Germany—from Nazism, from destruction, from invasion by the Russians. Would the West, in its contra-Carthaginian mood, have come to terms with such a new German government? In the political context of the early 40's, would it have recognized the purposes and integrity of a revolutionary group which was primarily of rightist, conservative, Christian inspiration? Is it not at least a possibility that the men who wanted to destroy Nazism and atone for it would have ended up leading Germany through the last months of resistance? The fact that the Western Allies almost completely ignored the German underground (only Allen Dulles, the OSS chief in Switzerland, seems to have taken it seriously) leads one to believe that a successful coup might well have led to an end more terrible—politically—than the war's end we saw in 1945. As it is, the honor of Germany was sustained by these brave men who, alone, tried and failed to save their country.

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From Screen to Book to Screen

THE CHASE. By Horton Foote. Rinehart. $3.75.
HARRISON, TEXAS. By Horton Foote. Harcourt, Brace. $3.95.

By WILLIAM J. SMITH

MR. FOOTE enters upon the literary scene with a flourish, publishing a first novel, *The Chase,* and a collection of eight television plays, *Harrison, Texas,* on the same day. Previously Mr. Foote has been best known as the author of several ill-fated tries at Broadway *(The Chase, The Traveling Lady, The Trip to Bountiful)* and as a television dramatist for the Goodyear-Philco Playhouse and the Gulf Playhouse. The present novel is an adaptation of the earlier Broadway work, and the collected television plays include the short original version of *The Trip to Bountiful.* Since *The Chase* is a natural for the movies, Mr. Foote would seem to be making the most of his material. Similarly, he has made the most of his locale. The plays and the novel are all set in a Texas town which Mr. Foote says resembles his native Wharton.

Life and other literary periodicals have hailed Mr. Foote's TV work as that presaging the development of the television-inspired artist. Certainly his work would seem to be a cut above run-of-the-mill TV drama. Mr. Foote says his themes are "acceptance of life" and "preparation for death," and indeed these themes are tenderly and honestly explored in the examples he gives us of his work. These playlets, in-

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cidentally, have the additional lagniappe of treating the economic facts of life in a somewhat more realistic vein than TV usually offers. But, all in all, it is a little difficult to see why Mr. Foote was hailed as the Paddy Chayefsky of his time. Perhaps it is merely that the quiet, matter-of-fact dialogue of his domestic dramas needs something in the way of visual appeal to fill out the skeleton. It is hard, at least, to imagine the book having much appeal to other than students of the drama.

The novel is an entirely different matter. The play from which it was adapted (if such, indeed, was the succession) was generally condemned as a bad combination of Wild West action and stodgy philosophizing. As a novel, *The Chase* succeeds in being a first-rate thriller with most of its philosophizing implicit or non-existent. The situation involves the return of a vicious escaped convict to his home town and the impact of his venture on the lives of the townspeople during one eventful night. Action centers around the sheriff, who has sickened under the pressure of his work and knows only that he does not want to kill or be killed. The characterizations are excellent, the action is fast and suspenseful and the ramifications of the plot neatly interlocked.

The novel attains a level beyond that of the mere thriller—psychological melodrama, perhaps, describes it better. Unfortunately, the author attempts to give the book further stature by adding a lengthy epilogue tracing the subsequent fate of his characters. This does not come off as an effect, probably in part because Mr. Foote's purely narrative style is exceedingly flat and burgeons with clichés: "Haws was already through with school, he hadn't cared for school and quit in the ninth grade, so he got a job working for a while in a filling station at twelve dollars a week and used it all for clothes and spending money, lived at home and was charged no board, then quit that to become a soda jerker. He used this pay to go to dances and to drink and gamble with the other young men around Harrison. . . . Six months later they were engaged, but she refused to marry him unless he gave up all idea of farming with his father, and until he found a job that she considered had some future to it. He applied then for the job of sheriff's deputy, got it and to his own surprise made an excellent officer."

With a style like this it is a wonder that Mr. Foote's story gets off the ground at all. The fact remains that it does and provides an excellent and provocative evening's entertainment.

REVIEWERS

William Clancy, formerly an associate editor of The Commonweal, is now a member of the editorial staff of *Newsweek*.

Joseph M. Duffy, Jr., is a member of the English faculty at the University of Notre Dame.

Father J. N. Moody, of the faculty of Cathedral College, New York, reviews frequently for this magazine.

William Pfaff, a former associate editor of The Commonweal, is now a member of the news staff of the American Broadcasting Company.

William J. Smith is a New York editor and literary reviewer.

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